

John Hardy Flanagan

John Hardy Flanagan was the son of Archibald H. Flanagan and Mary Bell. He was born August 13, 1859 and died September 27, 1920 in Farmville, Pitt County, NC. He married Nannie Bathsheba (Sheba) Smith. They had 5 sons and 7 daughters.

Much of the information included in these notes is from stories and remembrances of his daughter, Thelma and other family members. Sheba's sister, Lizzie was married to John's brother, Jay, and she had a brother married to John's sister, Nancy Penelope Flanagan. All this made for many double first cousins in the family. John grew up on a farm in the Farmville community. The farm is about a mile east of the town near a crossing of the Contentnea Creek called Chinquapin. He was active in the First Christian Church of Farmville and farmed all his life. He inherited a farm about 3 miles from Farmville on the "Old Plank road" between Lang's crossroads and Marlboro and according to Thelma he purchased additional property where what became his personal homestead had been built. The house was large with 10 rooms and suited his large family. . The farm was called "Cherry Hill." The house was eventually moved by A. C. Turnage, a descendent, to one of the Turnage farms near Lang's Crossroads and rebuilt. A.C.'s daughter now occupies it.

Thelma recalled that John had health problems when he was a youngster and later in life coupled with a weight problem but that he was a hard working, conservative merchant, lumber man and farmer. He was a reliable businessman as can be attested to by the fact he was named executor for his father's will. John's mother "petted" him to some extent because of his physical condition and naturally he adored her. He was in business, and many other activities as well as in farming. He had as many as 7 tenants on the farm who called him "Captain John". Much of his farming style had come from his father who reportedly paid his workers well but demanded that they be punctual and hard working. John was most concerned about the welfare of his family and that they become well educated. While many children had to walk to school he provided a surrey with a double team for them to ride to school in Farmville. He provided help for his wife for running the home, which was a good thing with 12 children. One daughter, Ruby Lyndell died at age 2 ½ and another daughter, Carmen, died of tuberculosis at about 19 years old, quite a shock to the whole family. A good example of John's concern for the welfare of his family has to do with Carmen and her death. When she was diagnosed with tuberculosis she was sent to a tuberculosis hospital for over a year. She decided she wanted to come home to die and John built a small, two-room house adjacent to his house for her. The small house was painted white inside and out. It had nine windows, double glass doors separating the bedroom and fireside room and had a little porch covered with a flowering vine. Carmen rallied but then died in the little house in 1910. In those years, few people survived tuberculosis.

John and his brother Jay both moved their families to Farmville so they could provide them with a good education and let them participate in the town's activities. The farms